

**City of Plattsburgh Common Council
Work Session, February 20, 2014
Minutes**

I.T. Department

Position

- Background: The 2013 Budget created an IT Department consisting of 3 positions, but the Council decided to move funds for one position to fund equipment.
- After some discussion that established the benefit of reinstating that position as recommended by Bryan Brayton, the Council recommended that personnel funds be reallocated. The breakdown of salaries will depend upon Mr. Brayton's salary, which will be determined before the vote to approve the reallocation. The budget will not be impacted because the money will simply be moved from one line to another.

Questions about updating the website

- Councilor Kretser asked if the bill paying function was secure. Mr. Brayton said that the City contracts out with a third party, Collectors Solutions (CSI) for this service. Privacy protections and safeguards are in place.
- There are plans to update the website. The IT department will contract with a company for design of the site infrastructure. The goal is to make the site easier to navigate and to provide application oriented efficiency technologies.

Melissa McManus

Ms. McManus works in Economic Development for the Village of Champlain Board. The main thrust of her presentation was to suggest ways for the City of Plattsburgh to get back on track with strategic planning and work with the Department of State (DoS).

- Complete the Local Waterfront Development Program (LWDP) process, which was first initiated in 1999 and revised slightly in 2010. This program is the blueprint upon which to plan projects, and is required by the State for grant consideration.
- The City has funds to develop a Vision Statement, which Kevin Farrington will spearhead. The process will involve grassroots and professional input and create the opportunity for the City to rediscover alignment with past documents (LWDP, Comprehensive Plan, The Clinton County Destination Master Plan, etc.), cull key points, and work toward a Strategic Action Plan.
 - "Visioning Committee" composition
 - It should be a diverse group: dreams, business professionals, taxpayers, regional visionaries, pragmatists.
 - Fifteen is a workable number.

- Documents should be digitized for committee members' use.
 - First visioning sessions should take place this summer.
- Over time the City has been the recipient of many DoS grants, and is in a good position to receive more. It is time to move out of dormancy and invigorate the processes that will bring resources to the area. It is important to understand that the process, though worthwhile, is very slow.
- Through the 2012 DoS Waterfront Revitalization Program and Environmental Protection Fund, Key Project money is available. Applications are due March 31st, perhaps as much as 30-40K.
 - We could request additional funds for the Visioning Process
 - A consultant could help with the process of finding alignment in planning documents, and suggesting what is actionable in the short vs. long run, what is attractive to private investors.
 - Funds could be requested to assist with the completion of the LWRP.
- Funding and Implementation
 - Consultants can assist with developing fund plans and implementation strategies. Most grants require a 50% match.
 - Other state grant sources will be recommended, for example, the North Country Regional Economic Council.

Marina Follow up

Councilor O'Connell expressed concern about taking action on the marina so that something is in place by the 2014 season. Could a temporary lease agreement about docks and moorings at least be achieved?

- The City will know the results of the BIG grant award in March.